

## Message Text

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62

ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-02

USIA-15 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 NSC-05 OMB-01 H-02 L-03

/063 W

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R 030840Z DEC 76

FM AMCONSUL FUKUOKA

TO AMEMBASSY TOKYO PRIORITY

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 653

UNCLAS FUKUOKA 0228

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, JA

SUBJECT: PRE-ELECTION MOOD IN WESTERN JAPAN

REF: TELCON PABST-BREER DEC 2, 1976

1. AS ELSEWHERE IN JAPAN, VOTER ENTHUSIASM IN KYUSHU AND YAMAGUCHI FOR DIET ELECTIONS SEEMS TO REMAIN AT A LOW EBB DESPITE CLOSENESS OF ELECTION DAY. VOTER APATHY IS ATTRIBUTABLE TO FOLLOWING FACTORS:

A. ELECTION IS RESULT OF EXPIRY OF TERM OF DIET RATHER THAN ISSUE-BASED DISSOLUTION.

B. BOTERS SEEM DISMAYED AND DISGUSTED WITH LDP OVER LOCKHEED SCANDAL AND SQUALID INTRPARTY LEADERSHIP SQUABLE AS WELL AS SCLEROTIC IMAGE OF LDP, BUT UNCONVINCED THAT ANY OF OPPOSITION PARTIES OFFERS REALISTIC ALTERNATIVE.

C. VOTERS SEEM TIRED AND BORED WITH LOCKHEED SCANDAL, WHICH IS ONLY MAJOR CONTROVERSIAL ISSUE, AND MORE CONCERNED WITH PROBLEMS OF PRICES, INFLATION, WELFARE, TAXES AND OTHER LOCAL ISSUES DIRECTLY AFFECTING THEM.

2. DESPITE LDP'S TARNISHED IMAGE AND BECAUSE OF PERSONAL OR  
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ORGANIZATIONAL TIES, MOST VOTERS IN THIS CONSERVATIVE AREA ARE

EXPECTED TO TROOP DUTIFULLY TO POLLS AND RETURN NEARLY ALL LDP INCUMBENTS ON AN ELECTION DAY WHICH LOCAL PUNDITS SEEM AGREED WILL OFFER FEW, IF ANY, SURPRISES. EVEN IN CASE OF QTE GRAY DIETMEN UNQTE, TWO OF WHOM ARE RUNNING IN THIS CONSULAR DISTRICT, ONE (SUSUMU NIKAIDO, FORMER CHIEF CABINET SECRETARY IN TANAKA CABINET) SEEMS SURE TO BE RE-ELECTED OWING TO HIS STERLING PRE-LOCKHEED ACHIEVEMENTS IN GETTING PORK-BARREL BENEFITS FOR KAGOSHIMA. OTHER QTE GRAY DIETMAN UNQTE (KAZUOMI FUKUNAGA OF KUMAMOTO PREFECTURE) LOOKS SHAKY, BUT EVEN IF HE LOSES, IT WILL PROBABLY BE TO CONSERVATIVE INDEPENDENT (JOJI EUKUSHIMA) WHO WOULD MOST LIKELY DECLARE HIMSELF AS AN LDP SUPPORTER AFTER ELECTION.

3. KOHNO YOHEI'S SHIN JIYU CLUB DOES NOT SEEM TO HAVE ATTRACTED A GREAT DEAL OF EXCITEMENT HERE. ITS ONE INCUMBENT (TAKEO NISHIOKA OF NAGASAKI PREFECTURE) IS EXPECTED TO RETAIN HIS SEAT, BUT THE OTHER CANDIDATE OF THE CLUB RUNNING IN YAMAGUCHI IS NOT EXPECTED TO WIN.

4. MOST INTERESTING DEVELOPMENT COULD BE LOSS BY JCP OF ALL IRA SEATS IN THIS AREA. COMMUNISTS HOLD ONLY THREE SEATS, ALL OF WHICH ARE IN FIKUOKA PREFECTURE. TWO OF THOSE ARE IN DANGER AND THIRD LOOKS SHAKY.

5. WHEN ALL VOTES ARE IN, OBSERVERS HERE PREDICT THAT OF 76 SEATS BEING CONTESTED IN ALL EIGHT PREFECTURES OF THE CONSULAR DISTRICT, MOST LIKELY NET RESULTS ARE:

LDP: DOWN THREE SEATS (FROM 44 TO 41)

JSP: UP ONE SEAT (AND POSSIBLY TWO--FROM 17 TO 18 OR 19

DSP: DOWN ONE SEAT (FROM SIX TO FIVE)

KOMEITO: COULD DO AS WELL AS UP THREE SEATS GKFROM FIVE TO EIGHT)JCP: DOWN TWO SEATS (AND COULD LOSE ANOTHER--FROM THREE TO ONE OR ZERO)

SHIN JIYU: RETAIN ITS ONE SEAT

CONSERVATIVE INDEPENDENTS: UP TWO (WHO MOST LIKELY WILL JOIN LDP AFTER ELECTIONS)

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